

# **Weight Loss**



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# Weight Loss

## Making sense of body weight

Before you decide if you need to loose weight, you must determine if and how much you may be truly overweight or “overfat.” The table below gives body mass index (BMI) (your weight in kilograms divided by your height in meters squared) and pounds (for actual weight) in each of three categories – healthy weight, overweight and obese. The range is wide for each category since body frame (larger skeletal frame weighs more than smaller frame) and muscle composition (muscle weighs more than fat) will vary greatly for individuals.

Weight	BMI Values	Man 5’9” tall (avg. height)	Woman 5’4” tall (avg. height)
Healthy Weight	18.5-24.9	121-163	108-144
Overweight	25.0-29.9	164-195	145-173
Obese	30 & above	196 & above	174 & above

## How much weight should you lose?

If you fall into the overweight or obese categories, then you should consider loosing enough weight to be in the healthy weight range. Your goal should be to lose about 1-2 lbs per week. A deficit of 500 to 1,000 kcal/day will lead to weight losses of about 1 to 2 lbs/week. This can be easily done through a combination of some calorie cutting (through food substitutions) and increased physical activity. Please remember that you may lose weight more quickly at first then plateau until your body is acclimated to the new weight. You may have bouts of more and less weight loss until your ultimate goal is achieved. Also, as mentioned above, muscle does weigh more than fat. If you build muscle while on an exercise program you may stop loosing weight or even gain weight. The important goal is to lose fat and either maintain or increase lean muscle mass. Having your body fat measured during weight loss is strongly recommended.

## Why do we need to lose weight?

Carrying excess body weight and fat can put you at risk for several disease states and conditions. Here is a brief listing of research supported associations between excess weight and health conditions:

- ♦ Excessive weight increases the risk of Type 2 diabetes through insulin resistance hence weight gain is strongly associated with risk of developing diabetes.
- ♦ Excessive weight is associated with the development of many cancers through its effect on hormones (primarily)
- ♦ Women who are overweight can have a threefold increased risk of developing cardiovascular heart disease

- ♦ Men who are overweight are twice as likely as those with a BMI below 23 kg/m<sup>2</sup> (healthy weight – see table below) to develop cardiovascular heart disease
- ♦ Every 10% increase in relative weight is associated with increase in cholesterol of 12 mg/dL
- ♦ With weight gain: triglycerides increase, high density lipoproteins (HDL) decreases, and small dense low density lipoproteins (LDL) particles increase (more atherogenic)
- ♦ Excessive weight is strongly associated with increased blood pressure and hypertension; for every kilogram of weight dropped, blood pressure falls about 1 mm Hg
- ♦ Overweight adults are more than 2 times as likely as leaner peers to develop osteoarthritis in the hip

## How to lose weight

### Popular Diets

Since many of us don't want to take the time to learn all we can about good nutrition, we turn to popular diets for what to eat and how to lose weight. Though these diets may help some lose weight (for a period of time), most diets are not safe for all individuals (especially those with diabetes and heart disease) and are certainly not for long-term weight maintenance.

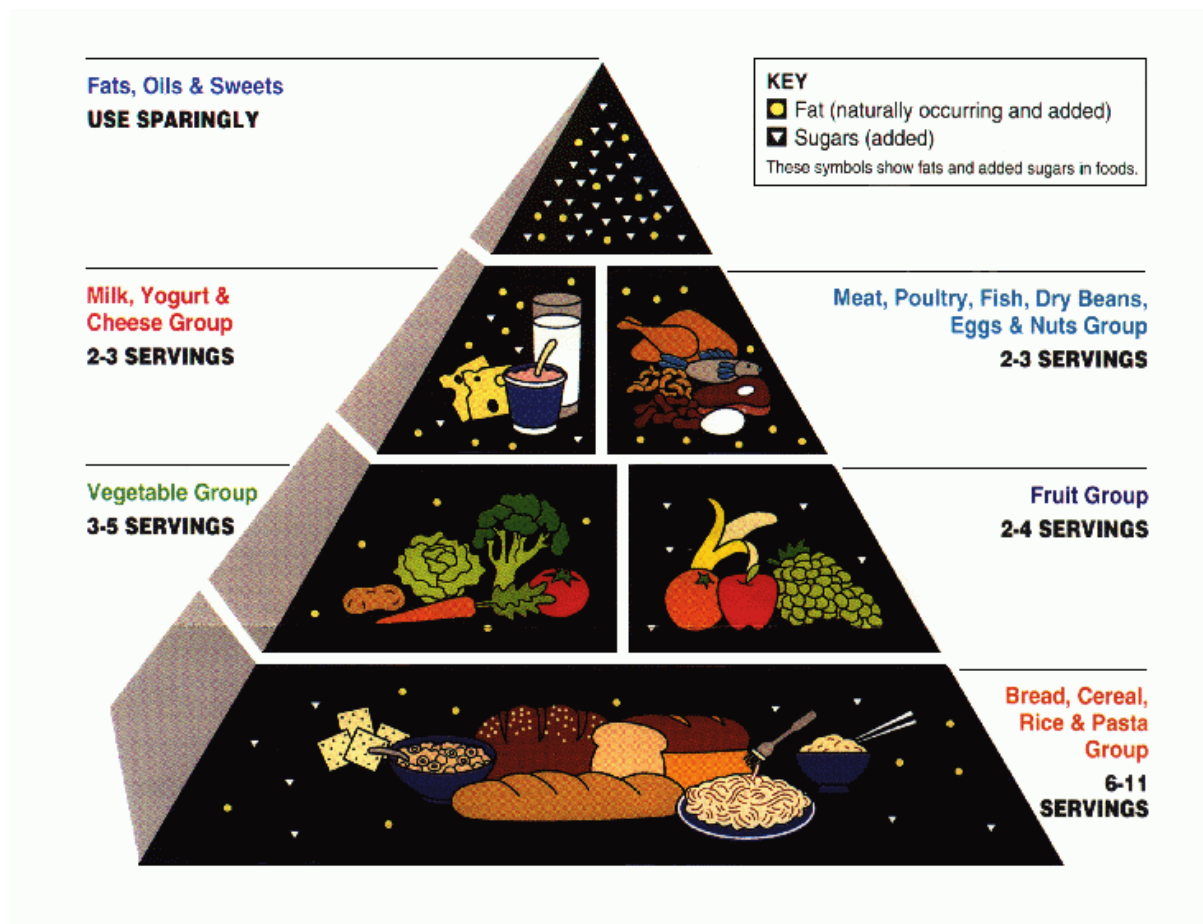
The most popular commercial diet debate is between low carbohydrate diets versus low fat diets. For instance, the Atkins diet, and during weight loss, the South Beach diet are low carbohydrate diets. Two long term randomized, controlled trials comparing low fat versus low carbohydrate diets found greater weight loss at three and six months on the Atkins style diet. However, after at one year, the difference between the two types of diets was not significant as a substantial amount of the weight that the low carbohydrate dieters had lost was regained. This suggests that short-term weight loss on the low carbohydrate dietary regimens may be better than those on a low fat, low calorie diet. However, long-term weight maintenance results do not appear to be good with low carbohydrate diets and may be better with low fat, low calorie diets.

Moreover, studies indicated that the low carbohydrate dieters drop out rates were high and adherence rates to the diet were low. No studies of low carbohydrate diets of greater than one year duration have been published to date. In contrast, a long-term trial (2-4 years) of a carbohydrate modified (low glycemic index) low calorie diet observed 90.5% weight maintenance in women who had reduced their weight to a normal BMI or achieved a 10% weight loss target.

### Basic Dietary Weight Management Guidelines

- ♦ An individually planned diet based on the overweight status (how much weight you need to lose to be healthy) to create a deficit of 500 to 1,000 kcal/day should be an integral part of any weight loss program
- ♦ Besides decreasing saturated fat, total fats should be 30 percent or less of total calories
- ♦ Eat at least the food guide pyramid (FGP) food group serving recommendations as a base (see FGP below)\*

- ♦ Plan on regular meals, minimum of 3 times per day but preferably 5-6 times per day. You want to try to eat every 4 hours. Three small meals and 2 snacks should be a goal.
  - ♦ Try to eat combinations of carbohydrates and protein at every meal (e.g. cereal and milk, bread and luncheon meat, cheese and crackers, chicken and rice)
  - ♦ Try to eat your larger meal of the day at lunch, particularly with the protein portion (this will aide in metabolism)
  - ♦ Build up the fiber and vegetable content of your last meal of the day (this will make digestion of your last meal easier before bed)
  - ♦ Allow one teaspoon of vegetable fat or the equivalent hidden in foods in each of your meals (e.g. margarine on toast, salad dressing, oil for stir fry) and limit any additional added fat or fat in your food beyond this amount (carefully read all food labels).
  - ♦ Drink a full cup of a hydrating beverage at the start of each meal (preferably water but could also be non-caloric decaf flavored carbonated beverages, unsweetened decaf tea, etc.)
  - ♦ Plan on keeping a daily record of your food intake including details describing your eating situation as to where, with whom, activity while eating, hunger level, mood, etc.
  - ♦ Plan on trying to have more relaxed meals especially for the largest meal of the day; set aside 30 minutes for the meal, sit at a dining room table, play relaxing music, etc.
- \* Note: The Center for Nutrition and Policy Promotion is currently revising the Food Guide Pyramid – The new pyramid is scheduled to be released in early 2005*



## Food Substitutions for Weight Loss

The above guidelines mentioned using food substitutions (with the FGP as a base) to cut calories by decreasing fat intake and increasing fiber intake. The following list of food substitutions target those food groups in the FGP that require attention in terms of fat and fiber.

<i>Instead of...</i>	<i>Try...</i>
<u>Meat</u>  fried chicken, fried fish, bacon, hamburger, hot dogs, prime grades of meat, ribs, poultry with skin, pork chops	extra lean meats (not fried) poultry (no skin) (not fried) fish (not fried) fat-free turkey or chicken slices ground turkey low fat Canadian bacon
<u>Eggs: Whole eggs</u> <u>Dairy</u>  Butter, margarine, whole milk, cheese, sour cream, cream cheese, whipped cream, ice cream	Egg substitutes or egg whites low-calorie butter substitutes (like "Take Control" or use a butter spray) nonfat milk nonfat or low fat cheeses (cream cheese, ricotta, sour cream) nonfat yogurt low fat or nonfat cottage cheese nonfat cool-whip fat-free frozen dessert, low fat ice cream or low-cal sorbet
<u>Bread, Rice and Grains</u>  Regular white bread, doughnuts, pastries, sweetened breakfast cereal, stuffing or dressing, cake with icing, baked goods made with whole milk, eggs or animal fat, croissants, biscuits, white rice, white potatoes, french fries	low-cal whole-grain bread whole grain or rye bagels (without toppings) brown or mixed grain rice fat-free angel food cake (no icing) rice cakes plain air-popped popcorn melba toast sweet potatoes yucca corn tortillas (not fried)
<u>Candy, Sweets and Snacks</u>  Chocolate, caramel, nuts, regular potato, corn, or tortilla chips, cookies, fried snacks, high fat crackers	fresh or frozen fruit fresh vegetables flavored nonfat yogurt baked potato or baked tortilla chips sugar-free hard candy frozen diet soda ice cubes pretzels Grape-Nuts Cereal Air-popped popcorn Fat-free pudding Low-fat fig bars Low-fat graham crackers
<u>Fats and Oils</u>  Mayonnaise, regular salad dressing, hot fudge or caramel sauce, peanut butter, saturated fat oils, gravy, cream sauces, cheese sauces,	nonfat salad dressing nonfat mayonnaise ketchup olive oil salsa applesauce nonfat yogurt low fat marinara sauce sugar-free or all-natural jam vinegar (balsamic, red wine, etc.) mustard Worcestershire sauce (low sodium) Soy sauce (low sodium)
<u>Drinks</u>  sweetened fruit juice drinks soda other regular drinks (like Sobe) hot chocolate flavored and milk-based coffee drinks	all-natural, unsweetened fruit juice vegetable juice diet soda iced tea (unsweetened or with sugar substitute) diet fat-free hot chocolate (made with water or nonfat milk) unflavored coffee (unsweetened or with sugar substitute) tea (unsweetened or with sugar substitute)  <b>BEST DRINK: WATER!</b>

## **Grocery Shopping Tips and Preparing Meals**

- Read all food labels carefully: Look for foods with the lowest fat, sodium, and sugar and highest fiber content
- Buy a variety of foods from each of the food groups in the FGP
- Try new foods, particularly fruits and vegetables
- Try to buy fresh or frozen fruits, vegetables and meats as opposed to canned or pre-packaged to avoid high sodium
- After grocery shopping, take time to cut up fruits and vegetables and pack them in refrigerated storage containers for snacking later on
- Take time on the weekends to bake or grill several pieces of poultry, seafood or lean meat to have during the week
- Prepare large batches of your favorite healthy dishes in advance then divide in portions to use for lunches or second dinners

## **Avoiding overeating triggers**

### **Trigger #1: "Lack of willpower"**

You can't discipline yourself out of your desire for food.

- Get rid of foods you don't want to eat
- Turn off the TV or do something during commercials
- Don't shop when you are hungry (avoid the chip and candy isles)
- Downsize your meals (eat only  $\frac{3}{4}$  of your meal)

### **Trigger #2: "Eating on the run"**

Too many meals are grabbed on the go and eaten too quickly

- Take your time eating (you may actually get full before you have finished all of your food)
- Eat mindfully (pay attention to the food you are eating)
- Prepare meals in advance or make a large batch of something (e.g. soup or turkey chili) that can be heated up quickly when in a rush

### **Trigger #3: "Nervous nibbling"**

Stress makes people overeat and nibble on food to ease anxiety

- Deal with the problem that is causing you stress (close your eyes and do some deep breathing, take a walk, write in a journal, etc.)
- Do something other than eat when you are under pressure (call a friend, engage in a hobby, etc)

### **Trigger #4: "Junk food snacking"**

Fast food and treats are full of fat, refined carbohydrates, and sugar that give us an immediate "high." However, hunger pangs and lethargy can set in creating a "low"

- Find satiation with fewer calories (eat fiber-rich whole grains, fruits and vegetables to fill up)
- Balance your meals with protein, whole-grain or complex carbohydrates with fiber and a little bit of fat for satiation
- Add water: drink water before, during, and after a meal and have a broth-based soup before a meal to fill up

Trigger #5: "Too tired to eat (well)"

We tend to overeat when we are tired (exhaustion prompts the body to fuel up for energy)

- Eat small meals throughout the day to keep your body energized (including a small healthy snack before bed if you are still hungry)
- Get some rest! Take a nap during the day or go to bed early.

Trigger #6: "Feeling emotional"

Food can chemically affect our mood (boosting serotonin) and make us feel good.

- See your health care provider if you are depressed often for treatment options
- Engage in physical activity – it can improve self-esteem, ease mild depression and help you burn calories!
- Keep yourself busy – boredom leads to eating when you are not hungry. Organize your home, wash your car, do yardwork, volunteer

## Physical Activity

As a start for increasing physical activity (PA) for weight loss, try walking 30 minutes for 3 days a week; then building to 45 minutes of more intense walking at least 5 days a week (this is strongly recommended).

With this regimen, an additional expenditure of 100 to 200 calories per day can be achieved. Adding 30-60 minutes of physical activity, 3X/week to a caloric cutting program (6 week average program time) increases the amount of weight lost by approximately 2 kg (4 lbs).

A long-term goal would be an accumulation of at least 30 minutes or more of moderate-intensity physical activity on most, and preferably all, days of the week.

You also want to increase "every day" activities (take the stairs instead of the elevator) and reduce sedentary time.

The following table contains the calories that can be burned in 30 minutes doing specific activities:

***Calories burned with 30 minutes of activity...***

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Calories Burned</b>
Aerobics/Group Fitness	30 min	245
Biking	30 min	148
*Field Sports	30 min	342
Golfing (Carrying Clubs)	30 min	219
Housework	30 min	157
Jogging	30 min	270
Stair Stepping	30 min	343
Swimming	30 min	278
Brisk Walking	30 min	185
Weight Training	30 min	217
Yard work	30 min	148

\* Soccer, Football, Frisbee, etc.

*Note:* "Calories burned" column is based on a 185 pound individual moving for a continuous 30 minutes, please estimate more or less calories burned according to more or less body weight

# Resources

## **National Weight Control Registry**

The National Weight Control Registry is a database of over 1000 individuals who have lost at least 30 lbs and maintained loss for at least one year. The average amount of weight loss is 64 lbs over an average of 7 years of follow-up. For information on lessons learned from those in the registry go to: <http://www.nwcr.ws/>

## **Burning Calories**

For more information about calories you can burn with various activities visit: <http://www.exrx.net/Calculators/Calories.html>

## **WIN – Weight Control Information Network**

<http://win.niddk.nih.gov/index.htm>

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